

Sub A12  
1. A method of fabricating a fixture having a seamless depression capable of holding a liquid, utilizing a thermoforming process, said method comprising the steps of:

a) placing a single sheet of heated, malleable, "solid surface" material in a vacuum mold;

b) creating a vacuum within the vacuum mold in order to deform the material into a shape having a substantially seamless three-dimensional depression or projection capable of holding a liquid;

c) allowing the deformed material of step (b) to cool to a substantially rigid shape; and

d) removing the substantially rigidly shaped material from said vacuum mold.

2. The method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the vacuum created in step (b) deforms the "solid surface" material to substantially its final shape.

1           3. The method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said  
2 deformed material comprises a flange portion, and wherein the method  
3 further comprises the step of:

4           e) constraining the material about said flange portion prior to  
5 and during said vacuum creating step (b).

1           4. The method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said "solid  
2 surface" material comprises acrylic plastic.

1           5. The method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said "solid  
2 surface" material comprises acrylic plastic and approximately between  
3 20 and 85 percent aluminum trihydrate filler by weight.

1           6. The method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising the  
2 step of:

3           e) bonding said rigidly shaped material of step (d) to another  
4 component.

1           7. The method in accordance with claim 6, wherein said another  
2 component comprises one of the group: countertop, curb, other  
3 assembly feature.

1           8. An article fabricated in accordance with claim 1.

1           9. The article fabricated in accordance with claim 8, comprising  
2 a shower pan.

1           10. The article fabricated in accordance with claim 8, comprising  
2 a bowl.

1           11. The article fabricated in accordance with claim 8, comprising  
2 any article having a depression or projection in a "solid surface"  
3 material suitable for holding a liquid.

1           12. A method of fabricating a fixture having a seamless  
2 depression capable of holding a liquid, utilizing a thermoforming  
3 process, said method comprising the steps of:

4           a) sizing a single sheet of "solid surface" material;

5           b) heating and placing said sized, single sheet of "solid surface"  
6 material of step (a) in a vacuum mold;

7           c) creating a vacuum within the vacuum mold in order to deform  
8 the material into a shape having a substantially seamless three-  
9 dimensional depression or projection capable of holding a liquid;

10          d) allowing the deformed material of step (c) to cool to a  
11 substantially rigid shape; and

12          e) removing the substantially rigidly shaped material from said  
13 vacuum mold.

1           13. The method in accordance with claim 12, wherein the vacuum  
2 created in step (c) deforms the "solid surface" material to substantially  
3 its final shape.

1           14. The method in accordance with claim 12, wherein said  
2 deformed material comprises a flange portion, and wherein the method  
3 further comprises the step of:

4           f) constraining the material about said flange portion, prior to  
5 and after said vacuum creating step (c).

1           15. The method in accordance with claim 12, wherein said "solid  
2 surface" material comprises acrylic plastic.

1           16. The method in accordance with claim 12, wherein said "solid  
2 surface" material comprises acrylic plastic and approximately between  
3 20 and 85 percent aluminum trihydrate filler by weight.

1 17. The method in accordance with claim 12, further comprising  
2 the step of:

3 f) bonding said rigidly shaped material of step (e) to another  
4 component.

1 18. The method in accordance with claim 17, wherein said  
2 another component comprises one of the group: countertop, curb, other  
3 assembly feature.

1 19. An article fabricated in accordance with claim 12,

1 20. The article fabricated in accordance with claim 19,  
2 comprising a shower pan.

1 21. The article fabricated in accordance with claim 19,  
2 comprising a bowl.

1 22. The article fabricated in accordance with claim 12,  
2 comprising any article having a depression or projection in a "solid  
3 surface" material suitable for holding a liquid.